

## Message Text

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41

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /031 W  
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P 181748Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2075

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 6049

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EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PQ, PN

SUBJ: HIGHLIGHTS OF 392ND PRC MEETING, OCTOBER 16,

1. AMBASSADOR JORDEN COVERED RECENT POLITICAL EVENTS IN CONNECTION WITH ANNIVERSARY OF REVOLUTION, UNITED BRANDS-GOP DISCUSSIONS AND PERTINENT PORTIONS HIS CONVERSATION SAME DAY WITH FONMIN TACK, ALL OF WHICH HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN SEPARATE MESSAGES.

2. GOVERNOR PARKER REPORTED PAN CANAL IS PREPARING REPLIES TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY WASHINGTON ON CERTAIN TREATY-RELATED MATTERS. STUDIES COVER CRIMINAL JURISDICTION, CIVIL JURISDICTION AS WELL AS LAND AND FACILITIES REQUIREMENTS. WITH REGARD PROCEDURE, GOVERNOR NOTED THESE TASKS RECEIVED IN VARIETY OF INFORMAL WAYS, INCLUDING BY PHONE. WITH REGARD TO SUBSTANCE, GOVERNOR COMMENTED THAT WASHINGTON POSITION PAPERS CONSTITUTE "MAJOR DEPARTURES" FROM EARLIER NEGOTIATIONS WHICH ENVISIONED A MUCH LONGER TRANSITION PERIOD. WHAT IS PROPOSED NOW IS AN ALMOST COMPLETE TURNOVER OF JURISDICTION IN RELATIVELY SHORT PERIOD. GOVERNOR EXPRESSED OPINION THAT WITHIN FEW YEARS AFTER NEW TREATY ENTERS INTO FORCE USG WILL NO LONGER HAVE CAPABILITY TO OPERATE AND DEFEND CANAL SHOULD GOP ADOPT HOSTILE POSITION. HE ASSUMED US NEGOTIATORS REALIZED THIS AND WERE  
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PREPARED TO TAKE THIS RISK. GOVERNOR PROMISED FURNISH

PRC MEMBERS COPIES OF PAN CANAL REPLIES.

3. GENERAL ROSSON STATED STOUTHCOM HAS COMPLETED COMMENTS ON PAPER REGARDING PANAMANIAN PARTICIPATION IN DEFENSE OF CANAL. HE PRESUMED PAPER HAD BEEN DESIGNED TO GAIN NEGOTIATING ADVANTAGE BUT SAID NO ONE IN UNIFORM COULD ACCEPT CONCEPT THAT US WILL NOT HAVE CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEFENSE OF CANAL WHICH IS STRATEGIC ASSET OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE. EXAMPLES OF CINCSOUTH EXCEPTIONS TO DEFENSE PAPER ARE: (A) GIVING PANAMA RESPONSIBILITY FOR "FIRST LINE" DEFENSES WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED AS "INCONSISTENT" WITH GUIDELINES PROVIDING US WITH PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEFENSE AND TRADITIONAL "FIRST LINE" ROLE OF US NAVY; (B) ELEVATING COMBINED COORDINATING BOARD INTO BODY RESPONSIBLE TO TWO GOVERNMENTS WITH COMMAND OVER COMBINED FORCES INSTEAD OF KEEPING IT A SIMPLE ORGANISM DESIGNED TO FACILITATE COOPERATION BETWEEN CINC AND COMMANDER OF GUARDIA NACIONAL (SOUTHCOM ENVISAGES COMBINED COORDINATING BOARD AS STAFF BODY CHARGED WITH PLANNING AND COORDINATION OF OPERATIONS); (C) USING PRETEXT OF PANAMANIAN PARTICIPATION AS "EUPHEMISM" FOR SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO ENLARGE SIZE OF GUARDIA. THIS WOULD UPSET MILITARY BALANCE IN AREA AND DETRACT FROM OBJECTIVE OF CARRYING OUT CONSERVATIVE PROGRAM OF MODERNIZATION FOR AIR FORCE AND NAVY ELEMENTS OF GUARDIA.

4. CINC ALSO VOICED CONCERN OVER PROBLEMS OF COORDINATION RESULTING FROM WASHINGTON PAPERS REGARDING TREATY NEGOTIATIONS FLOWING IN THREE SEPARATE CHANNELS, I.E., FROM STATE TO EMBASSY, FROM ARMY TO PAN CANAL, FROM JCS TO SOUTHCOM. HE COMMENTED THAT THERE IS NO CONSISTENT PATTERN FOR STUDYING AND STAFFING THESE PAPERS AND HE POINTED TO PAN CANAL PAPERS ON JURISDICTION AS CLASSIC EXAMPLE SINCE THESE ALSO HAVE DEFENSE IMPLICATIONS. CINC SAID ALL INTERESTED PARTIES SHOULD HAVE OPPORTUNITY PROVIDE INPUT BEFORE POSITIONS ON MAJOR ISSUES BECOME FROZEN. HE SAID IT IS WASHINGTON RESPONSIBILITY TO SEE THAT PERTINENT DOCUMENTS ARE DISTRIBUTED AND TO ASSURE ALL PARTIES ARE "PLAYING FROM SAME SHEET OF MUSIC."  
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CINC EXPRESSED THOUGHT THAT THERE IS NEED FOR MORE PRC ACTION ON TREATY MATTERS. AMBASSADOR AGREED ON NEED OF IMPROVED COORDINATION BUT SAID THAT PRC SHOULD BE FORUM FOR EXPRESSING INDIVIDUAL VIEWS RATHER THAN DEVELOPING SINGLE POSITION.

5. CINC ANNOUNCED COMPLETION OF DRAFT PLAN TO DISESTABLISH SOUTHCOM. PLAN NOW BEING SENT TO SACLANT, REDCOM AND

FORSCOM FOR THEIR COMMENTS. HE EMPHASIZED THIS IS CONTINGENCY PLAN PREPARED ON BASIS OF CERTAIN ASSUMPTIONS WITH SOME IMPORTANT DECISIONS STILL LACKING, INCLUDING BASIC PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION ON FUTURE OF SOUTHCOM.  
JORDEN

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Concepts:** COMMITTEE MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 18 OCT 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** boyleja  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** STADIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** boyleja  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 18 SEP 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <18 SEP 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <05 MAR 2003 by boyleja>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** HIGHLIGHTS OF 392ND PRC MEETING, OCTOBER 16  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PQ, PN, US, PANAMA REVIEW COMMITTEE  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005